

# Smart Growth in Merrimack Valley and Northern Middlesex

Douglas Foy, Secretary of Commonwealth Development

Lawrence, November 12th, 2004



**Mitt Romney,**  
Governor

**Kerry Healey,**  
Lieutenant Governor

# Challenge: Growth in Massachusetts

- Estimated 2.5 Million Undeveloped Acres
- Housing Supply and Cost
- Water
- Mobility
- Failing Infrastructure
- Quality of Life/Preserving Community Character



# Meeting the Challenge: The Romney Agenda

- **Office for Commonwealth Development**
- Double Housing
- Fix It First
- World Class Parks
- Open Space Protection
- Multi-modal Transportation Planning



# Guiding Principles for Smart Growth

1. Redevelop first
2. Concentrate development
3. Be fair
4. Restore and enhance the environment
5. Conserve natural resources
6. Expand housing opportunities
7. Provide transportation choice
8. Increase job opportunities
9. Foster sustainable businesses
10. Plan regionally

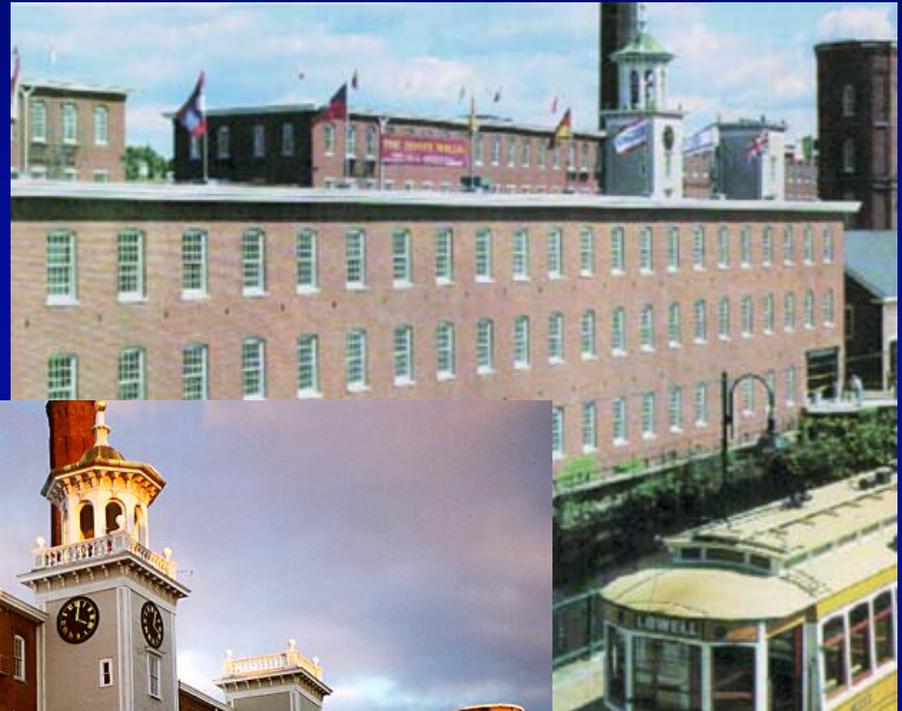
# Local Example: Conserve Natural Resources

- Malden Mills
  - Energy efficient facility
    - Received Certificate of Recognition from EPA in 2000
  - Approximately 3,000 employees



# Local Example: Redevelop First

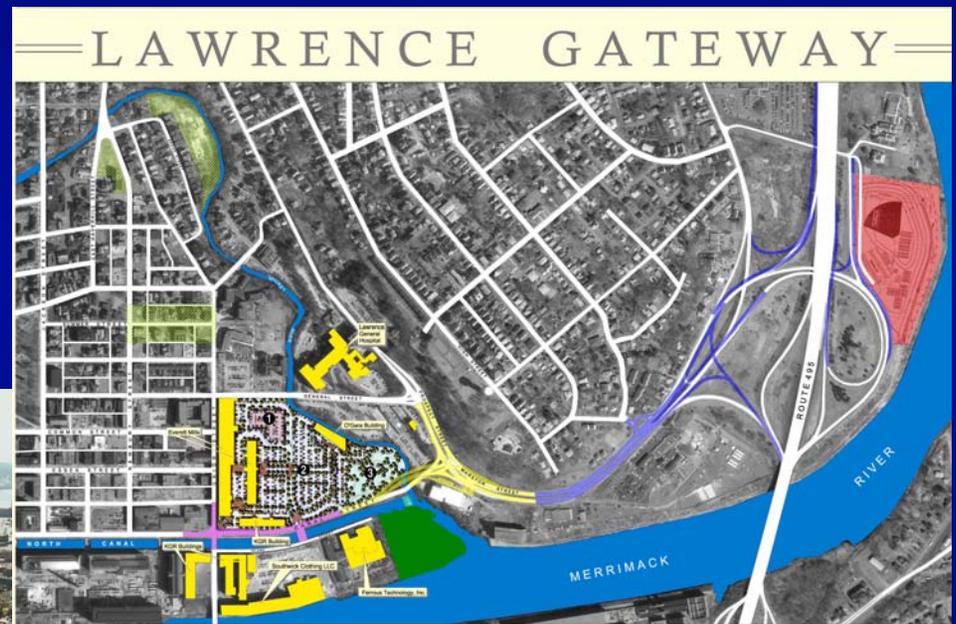
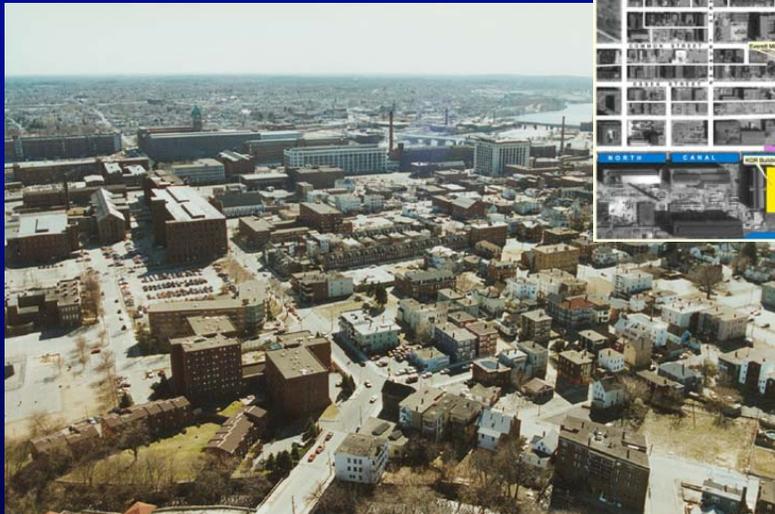
- The Historic Boott Mills, Lowell
  - The restored mill complex houses the Boott Cotton Mills Museum, a part of Lowell National Historical Park



# Local Example: Plan Regionally

## Reviviendo Gateway Initiative

- Overlay District
- Inter-modal Transportation Center



# How the Commonwealth Supports Smart Growth

## Recognition



- Find and Highlight Examples
- Case studies posted on OCD website
- Governor's Smart Growth Leadership Awards
- Governor's Smart Growth Innovation Awards (applications due December 15<sup>th</sup>)

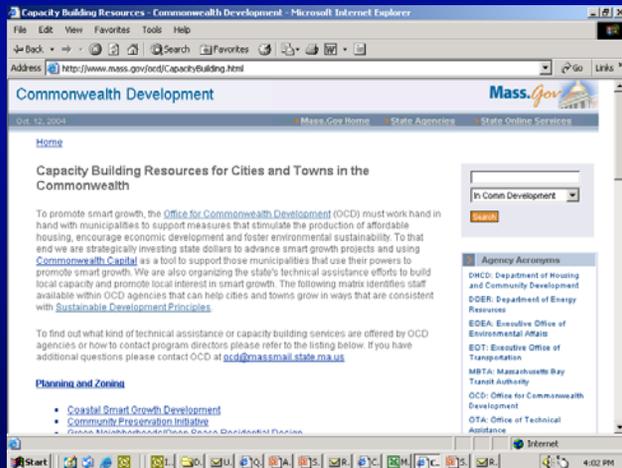


# How the Commonwealth Supports Smart Growth

## Technical Assistance



- Interagency Technical Assistance Teams
- Peer-to-peer network
- Interactive website under development

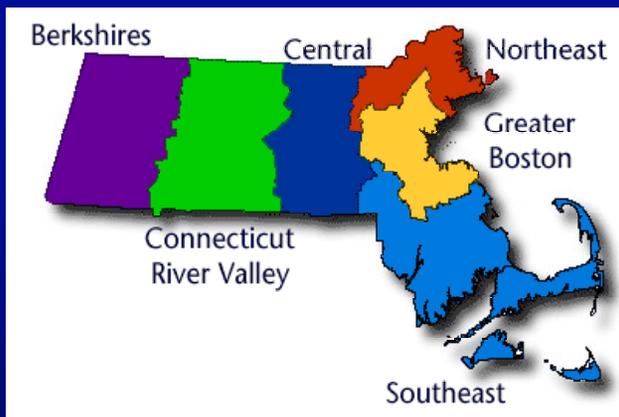


# How the Commonwealth Supports Smart Growth

## Planning and Zoning Funding



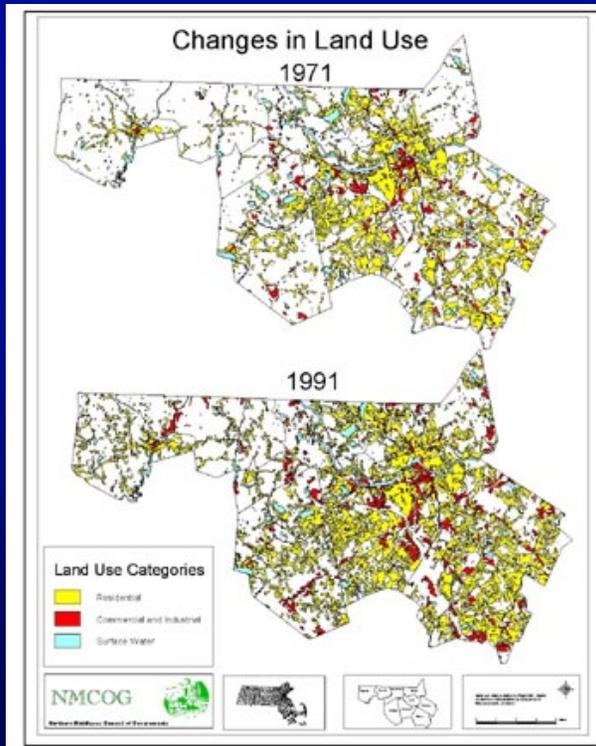
- Mass Housing Priority Development Fund (\$3M of planning grants)



- EOEA Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grants

# An Innovation: Smart Growth Zoning Law - Chapter 40R

## Planning and Zoning



- Incentives to create “smart growth zoning districts” in eligible locations
  - City, town, village centers/commercial districts
  - Around transit stations
  - Other appropriate “smart growth” locations
- Key criteria: Infrastructure + Walkability
- Must have 8-20 units/acre, affordable units, housing or mixed use
  - Flexibility for towns with populations Less than 10k
- Incentives: State \$ for re-zoning and issuance of building permits, priority in grant programs
  - Education costs to be addressed

# How the Commonwealth Supports Smart Growth

Project Funding



- **Commonwealth Capital:** Common administration of discretionary capital grant programs to ensure
  - Consistency of projects with smart growth policy
  - Alignment of municipal policies and zoning with Commonwealth interest in smart growth
  - Coordination of agency decision-making
- Includes economic and community development, open space protection, off-street parking, wastewater infrastructure and other programs
- Tuned to support communities of all sizes

# How the Commonwealth Supports Smart Growth

## Project Funding



- Fix-it-first (parks, roads, bridges, housing, transit, drinking water, sewers)
- MassHousing Priority Development Fund (housing)
- Limited, smart infrastructure expansion (transit, bike, pedestrian, streetscapes)

# How the Commonwealth Supports Smart Growth

**Tax Credits +  
incentives**



- State Historic Preservation Tax Credit signed into law
  - Focus on smart growth, affordable housing
  - Initial authorization \$10 million/year
- Support for upper-story redevelopment
  - Housing Development Support Program funding doubled (DHCD)
  - Forum on “Upper Story Redevelopment: Strategies for Your Downtown” (held on Oct. 13, 2004 in Worcester)

# Smart Growth Policies

- Smart conservation: land protection strategies
  - TDR Land Bank
  - SRF for land/open space
- Communities First
  - Highway Design Manual
- Fast track for smart growth projects being developed for
  - Environmental review (MEPA) process
  - Dep't of Environmental Protection permitting processes
- State Revolving Fund Program (water infrastructure) reform
  - Facilitate sewerage for town center growth
  - Get tougher on sewerage in outlying areas

# Still Needs Fixing:

- Technical Assistance
- School Costs
- 40A
  - ANR
  - Grandfathering
- 40B Reform

# Meeting the Challenge



“It is amazing what you can accomplish if you don’t care who gets the credit.”

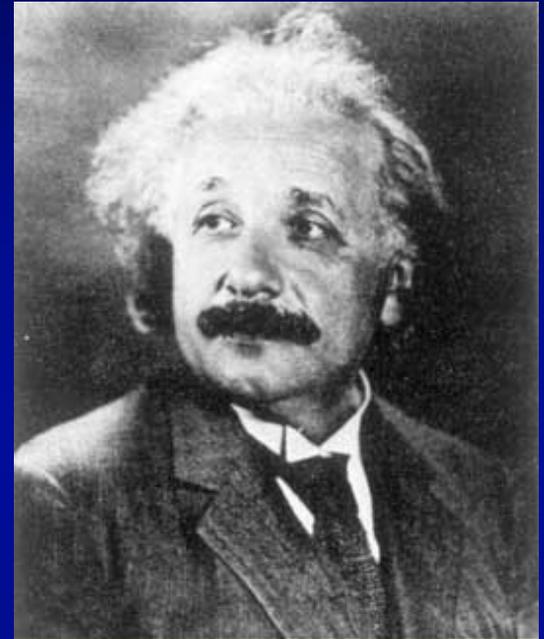
President Harry S Truman

Smart Growth is a critical element of  
the Commonwealth's Economic  
Growth Strategy

# RPA Presentations

# Still Needs Fixing:

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## Smart Growth

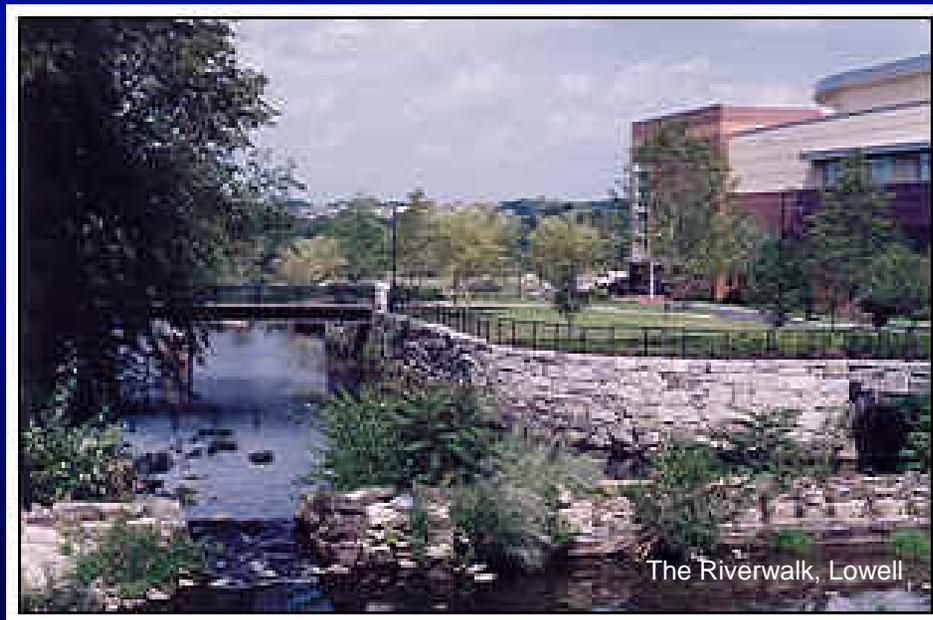
~~Peace~~ cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved through understanding.”

~Albert Einstein

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The Riverwalk, Lowell



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